

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED IN THE

FREE-TRADE HALL,
MANCHESTER,

AT THE

OPEN SESSION

OF THE

WESLEYAN METHODIST
CONFERENCE,

BY

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REPRESENTATIVE FROM

THE CONFERENCE OF THE WESLEYAN METHODIST
CHURCH IN CANADA.

1871.

AN ADDRESS

FREE-TRADE HALL

MEETING

NOTES IN

WESTLEYAN METHODIST
CONFERENCE

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REV. W. M. PUNSHON'S ADDRESS.

MR. PRESIDENT, Honoured Fathers and Brethren,—I thank you, on behalf of the Canadian Conference, for the kindness with which you have received and listened to the filial address which, as the representative of that Conference, I have been permitted to bring to you. I would fain on this occasion represent that Conference worthily, for my constituency is so vast, so intelligent, and so worthy of all possible honour, that they deserve representation of the ablest and of the amplest kind. (Hear, hear.) I am painfully conscious that my task is too heavy for my powers, and besides this consciousness, which of itself is sufficiently embarrassing, I am still further embarrassed by the circumstances which surround me, and by the presence in which I am called upon to speak. This meeting is supposed to be, and indeed it is, a session of Conference; but I have only to look upward and sideward to discover that all the hearts before me do not throb beneath clerical vestments. (A laugh.) Now there is a gravity of utterance befitting halls of legislation, and there is a freedom of utterance adapted to popular assemblies, which I am somewhat puzzled to know how to combine. The Canadian Conference sent to England last year a well-loved and eloquent representative, who discharged his duty, as his constituents thought, well; and, as gratitude exists in Canada, and we are not afraid to express it, the Conference recently held has told him so by formal resolution. One of those unseen kings, however, kings of the tripod, who sit in judgment upon the sayings and doings of your august assembly, while acknowledging the geniality and heart of the representative's address, has left on record his conviction that the Canadian representation was not overladen with dignity. Now I am heartily glad to be in such good company, for I am sure to fail in that particular regard. (A laugh.) My heart is very full—(hear, hear)—both towards the Conference proper, and towards those other friends among the laity who are as yet extra-Conferential. It beats altogether too warmly to be consistent with the patrician indifference which I suppose the dignity of a representative demands. (A laugh.) Moreover, if there is a spot upon earth where dignity sits ill upon a man, it is when he plays off its airs at home. (“Hear, hear,” and applause.) I will therefore ask you to excuse me if I lay my dignity where the mace of the House of Commons is laid, under the table—(laughter)—while I speak to you simply as a friend to friends. (Hear, hear.) I

will ask you then to listen for a brief while to words from a friend's lips intended for the ears of friends, and dealing with matters of common interest to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ. Lest I should forget it hereafter, I may just take the opportunity, as it has been the fashion—not because it has been the fashion, for it is sincerely uttered and expressed—to express the pleasure with which I see Dr. James in the presidential chair of the Conference. I trust that the year of his presidency will be a year of very great prosperity. In expecting this I am only judging by my knowledge of the past, considering that the President is endowed with so much of the traditional wisdom of *James*, and of the traditional tenderness of *John*—(“hear,” and laughter)—and that he will be helped forward by the counsel of good men at each side of him, and not least by the Wiseman—(a laugh)—whom the brethren have wisely chosen to be seated by his side.

I must now in the first place introduce you to my constituency, with which many people in England are only partially acquainted. Since the 20th of July, when British Columbia became formally confederated, the dominion of Canada comprises six provinces—viz., Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, and the newly-created one—thus stretching its vast area across the American continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and comprising a larger extent of territory than the United States of America by about 120,000 square miles. To the happy dwellers on this tight little island this may seem of small account, but over the water, where there is a tendency to value things by size, it is a noticeable fact. (A laugh.) Of the six provinces of the dominion, two, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, with the islands of Prince Edward and Newfoundland, not yet confederated, are comprised in the Conference of Eastern British America, where there are no fewer than 160 faithful labourers, with some 15,000 members in their Church fellowship. Of the other provinces in the dominion Manitoba and British Columbia, distant, newly confederated, and thinly populated; Quebec, where the vast majority of the people are Roman Catholics and French Canadians; and Ontario, where the United Empire Loyalists took root and grew, and where English, Scotch, and Irish Protestant settlers generally establish themselves—constitute the Canadian Conference which I represent to-day. (Hear, hear.) The diocese over which I am called upon to preside, for my work is episcopal, if my name is not—(hear, hear)—is 1,500 miles long by some 200 to 300 miles wide, exclusive of the missionary districts; and it contains within it a population of nearly three millions, or something less than the present population of London. There is something cosmopolitan in the dominion, both as to its nationalities, and as to the creeds of its people. You still take, I am glad to find, a warm interest in the affairs of Irish Methodism, and are prepared gladly to listen to the warm-hearted and eloquent representatives from the sister isle. Well, the Canadian Conference embraces within itself almost as many preachers of Irish birth as are contained in the entire Irish Conference, and they do not number a third of the whole. We have a large number of earnest and enterprising Irish laymen, to whom Canada has furnished a home, who infuse their characteristic energy into our institutions and gladden us with the warmth and fervour of their religious life. We have also a

large number of Irish of another sort, of whom I cannot now speak particularly—(a laugh)—except to say that we would gladly ship them back again by a fleet of very early and rapid steamers, that they might cry “Ireland for the Irish” to their hearts’ content and ours. (Laughter and “hear, hear.”) You have just listened to and welcomed a French representative, and your hearts are going out in sympathy for the trampled land and suffering people of France. We have in Canada nearly a million souls who are French in feeling, habitude, and language, held down by a superstition whose tyranny enthrals the mind, and watched with a jealous watchfulness which knows no interval of slumber. (Hear, hear.) We have also a large and constantly-increasing German population, thrifty, industrious, enterprising, but needing sorely to be instructed in religion—to have light infused into their effete Lutheranism, and restraint put upon their tendencies to lager beer. (Laughter.) And then, there are, roaming the plains or threading the forest, gathering food from the waters or living quietly and easily on the reserve, various tribes of Indians, to the number of about 100,000, fast decaying out of life, and needing the consolations of the true faith to illuminate their western hours. Among such a motley population you may expect that there will be found almost every possible variety both of speculative and practical error. We have to mourn over men’s indifferentism—that most dangerous and least impressible state, in which men have reasoned themselves into quiescent unbelief. We have among us, as I believe, the most compact, well-organised, earnest, sleepless Popery in the world. We have numbers who, in wilful oblivion of former privileges, have lapsed into the worst of all paganism—the paganism of forgotten Christianity. In addition, we have in the midst of us heathenism proper, manifesting itself now in cruel and now in eccentric developments. There are those yet among us who in barbarous ceremonies make the “medicine man,” and believe in his power to heal. There are those who sacrifice to the white dog, and hold frantic bacchanal of dance and feast around the altar. There are those who have a strange weird belief of some former existence in inferior shape, leading me to the conviction that Mr. Darwin’s theory of the descent of man has not even the merit of originality—(laughter and “hear, hear.”)—but is an unconscious plagiarism from the Indians of the Pacific coast. There are likewise to be found those whom paganism has so thoroughly embruted that they may be brought into degrading comparison with the very beasts of the field—hideous, misshapen creatures in the form of men—abortions of intellectual and moral being; and then, as if all this indigenous paganism were not enough, there is being rapidly imported the Confucianism and ancestor-worship of the Chinamen. Stolid, harmless, taking no heed save of the things of lust and life, with a giant passion for gathering gold, with an equal passion for gambling it away, with no collective worship, with all religious sentiment apparently as dead within them as if both intellect and heart were embalmed—they are coming amongst us in thousands; these heathen whom God is sending to the Gospel, because the Church is so slow of heart and purse in sending the Gospel to the heathen. (Hear, hear.) It will be evident from this view of the vastness of our territory and the multiplied

errors in our midst, that if there is missionary ground anywhere it is in the Dominion of Canada, and that if there is room anywhere for the operations of an earnest Church, with the boundless love of Christ in its creed, and with the life of that love in the hearts of its members, it is in the sphere which I represent this day! (Applause.)

Methodism in Canada, one in feeling, doctrine, and aim with your own holding reverently by the same traditions, thrilled by the primary inspiration of love to Christ, and by the secondary inspiration of many a pious pioneer legend of its own, has bravely girded itself for this great work of evangelism. In endeavouring to leaven the land with the pure truth of the Gospel of Christ, Methodism in Canada has certain initial advantages which are helpful to successful labour. I will just mention four of them. There are two kinds of work to be done in Canada. The settler must be followed to the remotest forest which echoes to the stroke of the axe, or through which arises the smoke of the clearing; and then the requirements of the age demand that the flock, however scattered, shall be housed and tended with all the shepherd's care. In these circumstances it is no small advantage that the men whom God raises up for the ministry in Canada are men who can do all kinds of work, who combine in themselves the pioneer and the pastoral elements of character. They can both fell the trees and build and furnish the house. Another advantage is that the stream of emigration, although it does not come, as in the Western States of the Union, in rapids and cataracts, yet flows steadily; and many a warm-hearted Cornishman and hard-headed Dalesman from the North finds ready to hand, so soon as he lands upon Canadian soil, the same hearty fellowships, the same free, grand ringing out of Gospel tidings, as those to which he has been accustomed to respond at home. (Hear, hear.) I do not know whether you will call it an advantage or no, but, in frankly speaking my own mind, I cannot help calling it a great and blessed advantage that Methodism in Canada walks abroad in the sunshine, that she cowers beneath no ancient shadow. (Hear, hear.) She neither frets under legal restrictions, nor droops beneath a baleful ascendancy. Oh, it has often been to me a glory and a joy that the Methodism which I love, my own native and preferred Jerusalem, has there taken the position which she ought always to take among the Churches—standing forth in her comeliness the peer of all, and in her charity the friend of all—(applause)—too kind to be the enemy, too proud to be the vassal—(hear, hear)—too affluent in spirit and resources to be the poor relation of any. (“Hear, hear,” and cheers.) Moreover, it is always an advantage to a messenger to be assured beforehand of the adaptation to those whom he speaks of the message which he is called upon to deliver. Now I believe that Methodism is adapted, above all other spiritual agencies, to the wants of those whom it endeavours to rescue and to save. (Hear, hear.) You will not do me the injustice of supposing for a moment that I am insensible to the good work which other Churches are worthily performing. (Hear.) The field is quite ample enough for all varieties of tillage. Our Presbyterian friends have many earnest ministers, a compact Church order, well-ordered Church schemes, and Canada owes much to them for their inculcation of high principles and for their battles for religious freedom; but their spread

is largely a matter of physical geography. The Episcopalians have wealth and still lingering prestige, and many earnest workers for the Saviour; but Ritualism, even there, enfeebles their spirituality and divides their ranks, whilst the exclusiveness of many of them hinders their progress, although, like the scolding of Talleyrand's wife, it pleases them and does nobody else any harm. (Laughter.) Our friends of the Baptist and Congregational Churches are doing good work in their respective spheres, but their spheres are partial, and as yet they show no signs of rapid development. So far as they are faithful to truth and catholic in spirit, I desire to say God-speed to all those Churches. (Applause.) Yet, after all my travelling and experience, I must express the firm conviction that Methodism (and in that generic term I include all sorts of Methodists) has within it an adaptation to the wants of every kind of people wherever found. It suits in the dense forest or in the crowded city; where the merchant counts his dollars, or where the Indian tracks the deer; in the living hum of industry, or in the remotest settlement where but lately the panther prowled, and where the adventurous settler has only just begun to fell the trees which centuries have rooted in the soil. Oh, there is something marvellously quickening in the proclamation of the message of mercy, available to the uttermost—available always—available now—which goes straight home to the human heart after all. As the emigrant carries into that new country not only his personal effects, but also the old burdens of sin, and care, and sorrow, you cannot wonder that he should listen eagerly to the grateful tidings of a present salvation. As in that emigrant's heart there still throbs the pulse of home, you cannot wonder that he should sing the new song the more readily because it is set to the old music—the music to which his heart beat time in childhood, the music which was the last perhaps upon the lips of his mother as she laid her down for her dreamless rest. (Hear, hear.) Well, with these collateral advantages on the one hand, and on the other hand with the drawbacks incident to an almost ceaseless western emigration, and to the fluctuation and spiritual feebleness which are incident to a life of change, how has Methodism prospered? Has she fulfilled her mission? Has she in any wise, like the Pilgrim fathers, “won the wilderness for God?”

Somebody said a little while ago, or at least meant it—(a laugh)—that statistics were very dry things, and after all they are at best only approximate sources of information. The best successes, such as the moulding of public sentiment, the creation of a deep current of true religious feeling, cannot be tabulated at all; but some idea of the relative power and importance of Methodism in Canada may be gathered from a comparison of her now with herself at a former period, or even with the English rate of increase within a similar period of time. Some seventeen years ago the missions of Lower Canada were formally transferred to the care of the Canadian Conference. This was the last epoch, so to speak, in the history of Canadian Methodism. In that period the membership of the Canadian Conference has increased no less than 77 per cent.—(applause)—as compared with 32 per cent. in the British Conference, and this of course does not include those who, like the Irish spoken of by Dr. Scott, have gone to enrich other countries, or those who have got safe

to heaven and are beyond the power of mischief or harm. Nor do the figures include a large number who are ranked as Wesleyans in public estimation; who would return themselves as Methodists to the census enumerators; who, if they are not Methodists, are unchurched and uncovenanted strangers, but who nevertheless do not meet in class, and are therefore not accredited—class meetings being the test of membership there as here. At the beginning of the same period the number of Canadian ministers was 235, but that number has been more than doubled, as we have now 500 in actual work, besides about 100 who are resting after the burden of a long and laborious day. (Hear, hear.) Gauging progress by church accommodation, you may remember that for a million larger population in London Methodism is said to have only about 130 places of worship, whereas in Canada we have no fewer than 1,160, valued at two millions and a half of dollars, or about £500,000. (Applause.) So thoroughly has Methodism leavened the population, that one-tenth of the people in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec—or, if Quebec be excluded as including principally French Canadians who are Roman Catholics—one-sixth of the population is under the teaching and influence of the well-loved Methodism of our fathers, and on the lowest computation not a week passes without the dedication of a Methodist church to the hallowed purposes of Gospel testimony.

With regard to education, the common school system of Canada is so impartial and comprehensive, that no denominational schools are needed. It is largely the creation of one of our own ministers, the Rev. Dr. Ryerson, to whom God has granted the rare privilege of rearing his own monument, “*ære perennius*,” in his life-time. Methodism, however, takes its proper share in the higher education of the Dominion. The University of Victoria College has, besides 105 students in the Preparatory Grammar School, 86 students in arts, 197 in its affiliated schools of medicine, and 26 in its faculty of law; making altogether 384 students under special Methodist oversight; and many of the graduates are earning degrees, good degrees in that wider university of life where the competition is of the keenest, and where the battle is not always to the strong. (Hear, hear.) The institution has been financially crippled during the past few years by the withdrawal of the Government grant on which it mainly depended, at least which has been our principal source of revenue. Now, however, we are appealing to the people for an endowment, and although the response is somewhat tardy, we hope that the amount needed will be realised in a year or two’s time. There is a considerable desire to establish, what I am sorry we have not, a theological chair, or, at any rate, provision for the systematic theological instruction of students for the ministry. One feature presented by the Canadian young men has very much impressed me; and, unless my remembrance of the young men on this side of the water has deceived me, it is a matter which some of them might not unprofitably ponder. The young men called to the ministry in Canada are most anxious to be thoroughly furnished for their work, and of late years there have been instances—and it is only in succession to what has happened in previous years—of young men who, after the completion of their probation, have requested the Conference to allow their ordination to be deferred

until they got a three years' course at college. Have there been in England any examples of that sort to point out? (A laugh, and "hear, hear.") If my memory serves me right, the young men here are generally anxious to graduate in another sort of college at that particular time. (Laughter.) The young men of Canada have, however, been taught differently. They have read and mastered that mystical parable in Judges i., where Caleb promised his daughter only to the man who should take the city of Kirjath-sepher, which being interpreted, means, the City of the Books. (A laugh, and "hear, hear.") From this they have fairly deduced the very substantial corollary that with all their minds they must become acquainted with truth before with all their hearts they become allied to beauty. (Laughter and applause.) While the young men of the country are thus regarded, those who are to be the wives and mothers of the future are by no means forgotten. For them there is a flourishing Wesleyan College with 237 fair students enrolled. (Hear, hear.) The course of instruction is extensive, solid, and, so far as I have had any opportunity of judging, thorough. In the closing exercises which I was privileged to attend the night before I left for England, there were essays read displaying a penetration and breadth of view, along with a combination of apt and happy words, which would have done no discredit to places of much higher pretensions. Since 1859, sixty-five of these students have graduated, fifty-three of them in the degree of mistress of English literature, and twelve who have taken a classical course, in the degree of mistress of the liberal arts. (A laugh.) It perhaps sounds strangely in English ears to talk of ladies who have obtained diplomas, but you know that English education is progressing very rapidly in that matter. ("Hear, hear," and a laugh.) Now that ladies legislate in the English school boards, lecture on political economy, and practise medicine, it is only one step further, I think, to realise Tennyson's idea of a college with "prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans, and sweet girl graduates with their golden hair." (Laughter.) I have closely watched some of the fair graduates in question, and I am bound to testify that I do not observe them to be less feminine or sensitive than others. Their scholarship has not robbed them of the nameless delicacy and healing tenderness which are the charms of womanhood. (Hear.) While their intellects have thus been highly cultivated, I am thankful to say that the moral discipline has been earnestly and prayerfully maintained, and that the results, in fact, have been above all praise, except praise to Him who has brought so many out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel. (Hear, hear.)

The Sunday-schools of Canada, as well as those throughout the whole American Continent, are a vast power for good, and are managed with remarkable completeness. We have there realised the true idea of Sunday-schools—the bringing of every child in the congregation under Church oversight and instruction. There all the choicest families in the Church are always represented in the Sabbath-school, first as scholars and afterwards as teachers in their turn, while from these, as from a centre, mission-schools are undertaken in quarters where they are very sorely needed. There are 917 Sabbath-schools in connection with the Canada Conference, manned by 8,877 teachers and

numbering 64,598 scholars, 10,600 of whom are upwards of sixteen years of age. There is no part of Church work in Canada, as, indeed, throughout the whole Continent of America, which receives such earnest, and I had almost said, scientific attention. The Church gives its best culture and its highest life to train the young for Christ. (Hear, hear.)

While thus and otherwise endeavouring to go with its direct ministry of the truth into the midst of the common educational agencies, Methodism in Canada is trying to do something towards the creation of a pure literature and a healthy taste for it. The Book-room in Toronto is a very flourishing establishment, and it is highly satisfactory to read the report of its year's doings, which I have in my hands, and which, by the way, was printed and distributed to every member of the Conference at the time when the book affairs were under consideration. (A laugh.) The *Christian Guardian*, the ably edited organ of the Conference, finds its way weekly into 21,000 homes; and although the original works issued from the Book-room are select rather than numerous—(a laugh)—yet I believe the number to be about as many as have gone out this year from City-road, and it is a fact that the best works of English literature are eagerly purchased and eagerly read. The theological and ethical works of the best English writers are standards in many a Christian library in Canada, to say nothing of the continued appreciation of those religious biographies which so well keep the flame of divine love alive in the heart. In many a remote Canadian home, where you would hardly think civilisation had gone at all, are worthy Christians whose emotions have been powerfully stirred up over the persecutions of William Shrewsbury, and who pray right heartily that there may descend on them the mantle of Thomas Collins. (Hear, hear.)

The great work for which a magnificent demonstration is to be held in this hall to-morrow night is not forgotten amongst those from whom I come. The Conference in Canada commits itself heartily to the temperance reformation. ("Hear," and applause.) The ministers, by their precept and example, are continually endeavouring to drive that accursed foe of intemperance out of the land. (Applause.) There is one part of Canadian legislation which does not seem to them to be inconsistent with civil liberty; and it is this. It stands upon the Statute-book—although whether it is obsolete in practice or no it is not for me to say—that if a man, to use plain Saxon language, is made drunk and can be proved to have been made drunk in a public-house, and on his way homeward falls and breaks his leg, and mortification ensues from the wound, and he dies, then the widow can recover damages from the public-house landlord who made him drunk. ("Hear, hear," and applause.) Now I should not mind if you carried out that sort of permissive legislation at home. (Hear, hear.)

I cannot say much just now about the question of union. Methodist union, there can be no doubt, is a very desirable thing if it could be accomplished without any sacrifice of principle, and with every sacrifice of prejudice and croquet. (Hear, hear.) Let there but be the maintenance of principles which have always been held to be fundamental, and then I do not know that any Church can be quite guiltless if it do not endeavour to make everything else bend to the realisation

of that which, because the Saviour prayed it, must surely be a possible thing—viz., “that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”

If the pulse of Methodism at home still beats as it used to do, I am sure that the missionary aspect of the work in Canada will be regarded with special interest. (Hear, hear.) So vast are the needs, and so ample the opportunities in Canada itself, that these claim, and justly claim, the first attention. (Hear, hear.) The settler must be followed; Methodism dare not be faithless to its original commission in that matter. Wherever the settler goes, the Methodist preacher goes, bearing in his hand the open Bible, while from his lips is uttered the simple proclamation of the truth as it is in Jesus. Such is the demand, the urgent demand for additional labourers, that although forty-two young men were admitted on trial as students for the ministry, and although five ministers from other Churches cast in their lot with us, yet when the stations were gone over there were twenty needy applications which could not be supplied. (Hear.) There is great room in Canada for earnest, godly labourers. The Canadians do not want men whom the English brethren reject as incompetent—(laugh)—for the base-level of intelligence there is a higher level than is found at home—no question about that, it is about as much higher as the loftiness of culture is lower. If, however, there are men to be found anywhere whose love to Christ is true, who have a passionate yearning to save souls, who have unbending principles and flexible prejudices, who are docile enough to submit to a superintendent, and yet prudent enough to be trusted without one—(a laugh)—men who can, in fact, be enterprising, sound, loyal, patient, all-round Methodist preachers, then such men can find a sphere in Canada with ample room for them to move about without jostling their next-door neighbour—(laughter)—and they can moreover find opportunities for gaining a good degree among their brethren, as well as an abundant entrance by-and-bye into the kingdom of heaven. (Applause.) The missions among the German population and among the French population have suffered from the difficulty of finding suitable labourers. They are more hopeful, however, just now, than they have been for some years past. I should just like to say that especially among the French population it is impossible to chronicle or tabulate exactly the successes that are attained by any evangelical agency, because in the provinces of Lower Canada, as soon as any are converted, a nameless fretting persecution sets in—something on which others cannot lay their hands, but something that is nevertheless tangible enough to the poor fellow who has to feel it. This results pretty generally in the exile of the so-called heretic from the land and from the home of his fathers. On the Indian work in Canada I need scarcely speak at large, except to say that it needs to be very wisely managed. From the inherent difficulties of the work itself, it needs a wisdom and sagacity that can only come, as I was going to say, by something like direct inspiration from on high. Three representative Christian Indians have at different times told their story in England. Peter Jones died in the faith, and has left a fragrant memory. Another, as some of you may remember, did not bear his visit to England so well. The third, the venerable John

Sunday, yet lives and works a little, although in "age and feebleness extreme." He has lost none of his love to Christ, he has lost none of his affectionate interest in the Methodism of England. Hearing that I was coming to England, John entrusted me with a letter to the Conference, which perhaps the President will kindly allow me now to read.

[The letter was then read.]

The missions to the Red River have had to go through a year of trouble and peril. Nearly one-third of the Indians have been swept off by the small-pox, and although the missionary's family have not altogether escaped, the missionary has been sustained by indomitable faith, and rejoices in the fidelity of the native converts and in their triumph in danger and death. There are many difficulties, as you may imagine, in the way of the conversion of the Indians. The Indian was once monarch of the plains, and he cannot be expected to cherish a very friendly feeling towards those who have superseded him. He is fast fading away, and being helped to his decay by the worst of the worst white man's habits, and he cannot be expected to be very friendly towards those by whom he has been corrupted and ruined. Besides, there are among the Indians many dissensions—some of them hereditary—which are mischievously fostered by the advocates of a cunning policy of extermination. Between the two opposing parties the missionary can scarcely escape blame or injury. The Indian prefers the life of Nimrod the hunter to that of Noah the vine-dresser, and lately the buffalo has seemingly almost vanished from the prairies, and many of them connect this threatened famine with the presence of the missionaries in their midst. Thus the missionaries have to be wise as serpents, harmless as doves, only, as a coloured preacher said, in commenting upon that passage, they must take care to mix the ingredients right—say in the proportion of a pound of the dove to an ounce of the serpent. (A laugh.) The missions in British Columbia, which I have recently been privileged to visit, were established some sixteen years ago. They were started by the Canadian Conference, sustained by the moral and financial support—only a little of the latter, however—(laughter)—of the Conference at home. The first batch of missionaries was headed by the Rev. Dr. Evans, ex-co-delegate of the Canadian Conference, of whom such respectful mention was made in your last year's address, and who is worthy of all that you can say in his favour, for as a Western presiding elder remarked of the late Dr. Newton, "He is a happily put up man." (Laughter, and "hear, hear.") I have been privileged in connection with the Indian work—the needs of which specially impressed me—to ordain a minister for that special ministry, the first Methodist ordination, but not the last, I hope, by hundreds, in that part of the Pacific Coast which is under the British flag. The man I ordained was a noble specimen of what God can make of a Yorkshireman when He has work for him to do, how He can deaden him to love of home, and friends, and ease, and culture, and fill his heart with one consuming and holy passion to save the Indians; how, with his own language not perfectly mastered, He can make him powerful and even eloquent in the utterance of another; how, with no native superiority of position, He can raise him to an influence over those far-off pagans which the most ambitious statesman

might envy. I have gone with him into the Indian encampments and seen how their stolid indifference has yielded to his appeal; how from the dull red eye there shot as he spoke to them a momentary sparkle of light. I have seen that missionary reprove an old chief—a very proud, solemn, and dirty one—for neglect of worship and for working on the Lord's-day, and so great was the influence of the reprover that the reprov'd, chief though he was, and pagan to boot, whimper'd like a whipped child, and spent about ten minutes in making an apology. It is no small advantage to have a man who has so many human conditions of success, and who has so abundantly received the signal blessing of the Lord. (Hear, hear.) There are many great language difficulties to be overcome in the work in British Columbia. There are 40,000 Indians, it is supposed, scattered throughout that country. The missionary speaks a language spoken by about 3,500 of them, and the Hudson's Bay Company have invented a sort of jargon which they call Chinook, by which they are enabled to communicate with the natives for the purposes of trade, and this gives us access to many more. It is necessary, however, to be very cautious in the use of Chinook, as it is a very imperfect and unready vehicle of utterance. For instance, a lady sent an Indian servant for two loaves of bread, speaking in Chinook. It was a long time before the servant returned, and when he did he was seen toiling up the hill with a wheelbarrow, on which were two sacks of flour. The faulty Chinook had thus certainly conveyed truth, but it had conveyed it in the raw. (Laughter.) It is a current story with reference to a certain Episcopal dignitary that he once condescended to address the Indians through an interpreter in Chinook. He began his address in a way which would at once suggest itself to any man with a little sentiment. He said: "Children of the forest," which is a slightly poetical and rather flattering mode of address! but one can fancy the grimaces that came over the dusky countenances of the Indians to whom he spoke when the interpreter translated the words, "Little men among big sticks"—(laughter)—being the only available Chinook for the expression. I mention this just in order to let the present audience see that it is not easy work with the means at hand to overcome the difficulties that are inevitable in missionary endeavours to gain effectual access to the Indian mind and heart. (Hear, hear.) And yet it is true, for I have seen it, that while you cannot lecture these men into thrift and industry, and while all endeavours to impress them with the superiority of civilised life will be met with a grunt of indifference or with the puff of smoke which is so fair an excuse for silence, they are not insensible to the power of the Gospel of Christ. A missionary has only to plant the cross in the midst of them, and under the shadow of that blessed cross all that is embroiled and unworthy will die, and all that is of good report and lovely will begin to spring up and ripen. (Applause.) On the sole ground of the civilising influence of Christian missions I should like to set any sceptic down upon Nanaimo, a beautiful settlement on the eastern shores of Vancouver's Island, where, if they liked, they could see the two systems growing side by side. There are two streets in that Indian village not much more than 100 yards from each other, called respectively the Heathen and the Christian street. The first presents

close to the river a long row of low log huts, without windows, without chimneys, with a common door, and earthen floors with boards loosely nailed here and there, but nowhere forming a complete enclosure; and within these eight or ten families herd together, without decency, without convenience, unkempt, unclad save with blankets, unwashed, and altogether presenting as degrading a downfall from the image of God as can be found on this side of hell. In the Christian street, on the other hand, there is cleanliness and comfort; there is the institution of the "family apart"—(hear, hear)—there is thrift, there is a measure of industry, and there is the idea and the look of home. (Applause.) There the two systems are side by side, for all the world to look upon. In the lower street are fathers, brothers, and relatives of those in the higher street, and, as the Gospel reaches one heart after another, a small emigration is constantly going on. ("Hear, hear," and applause.) Oh, if any of the education-mongers who laud their own agencies so highly, and who sneer at the Gospel of Christ, had only accomplished one-half such improvement, how the great worshippers of the Pan of human sufficiency would have held high festival, and there would have been garlands and incense, and we should have heard the clang of cymbals and the shout of unlooked-for triumph over the length and breadth of the land! But it is reserved for Christianity to achieve triumphs like these, showing in the highest and most complete sense that godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come. (Applause.)

I think enough has now been said to show the nature and extent of the work that Methodism is doing in Canada, and that, if it is only faithful to its mission, its future will be inseparably bound up with the future of the Dominion itself. (Hear, hear.) What that future may be it is not for me to predict. Wisely managed, however, encouraged with the moral support of this great country, with a foresight shrewd to perceive and an enterprise prompt to grasp great opportunities, with a patriotism which would forbid all purely selfish aims among her sons, there is empire in the young Dominion's loins. (Hear, hear.) Whether or not that promise of her future will ever be realised depends largely upon her own action, but I am bound to say it largely depends also upon the treatment which she receives from home. (Hear.) I am not here to talk politics, and this is not the place for that, if I were so disposed. I would only say, therefore, that if the English think it worth while to retain Canada as a comely appenage to the British Crown, then her loyalty should neither be suspected nor rebuffed. (Hear, hear.) She should not be told so often that Britain has not the slightest wish to retain her a moment longer than she is wishful to stay, because telling her so only suggests thoughts of going which would never otherwise have entered her head, and provokes the still more irritating thought that Old England wants to get rid of her. When a Fenian invasion has been put down by God's blessing upon the prompt valour of her own volunteers, she ought not to be subjected to the mortification of hearing the national representative of Britain eager to express thanks to other parties, as if they had done the deed—parties by whose connivance or consent the conspirators were allowed to arm, drill, march, organise, and start upon their miserable enterprise, and who never interposed until the whole thing

proved a *fiasco* and a failure. ("Hear, hear," and applause.) Neither ought Canada to be made to feel, when England gets into difficulties, that England is anxious or willing to sacrifice her interests, with very little exercise of self-denial, in order to propitiate that political Ahab, who, although his possessions are already unwieldy, often casts a very loving and longing look towards the acquisition of Naboth's vineyard. (A laugh, and "hear, hear.") This I venture to say, not as a Canadian, but as an Englishman in Canada, loving my own land right well, loving Canada right well, and withal cherishing a most sincere and hearty admiration of many things and people in the United States, also with an intense love for that inner America which does not often come to the surface, but which I have been privileged to see. I do, however, want truth, and comfort, and peace, and prosperity, and confidence all round. (Applause.)

And now, in conclusion, I beg, on behalf of the Canadian Conference, to offer on the present occasion the very hearty and filial salutations of that Conference to the great body now assembled. We joy in the triumphs of our British brethren! we sympathise with your sorrows and trials; and our fervent prayer is that the God of your fathers may give to you the increase of the hundredfold, and in the world to come everlasting life. (Applause.) To these prayers and greetings, offered in my representative character, I may be permitted to add my own. (Hear, hear.) I do not come among you as one that is quite a stranger. ("Hear, hear," and applause.) My heart is very full when I speak to you. Some of you may imagine, although none can thoroughly realise, the tumultuous rush of feeling which surges in my soul to-night, sternly repressed by the needs of my position. This is the third Manchester Conference that I have been privileged to attend; Manchester Conferences are eras in my ministerial history. Twenty-two years ago I stood in the gallery of Oldham-street Chapel, a candidate for ordination, raw, inexperienced, girding on an armour which I had but slightly proved. Twelve years ago I rose from the platform of Oldham-street Chapel to acknowledge my election to the "legal hundred"—an honour never before conferred on one so young. I stood then before you after a year of deep sorrow, and of extensive travel and labour, to testify to the goodness of God and to offer my gratitude to them who had placed such a trust in my hands. Twelve more years have passed away, and now, after a year of more extensive travel, and of deeper sorrow, I stand before you as representative to the Church at home from the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, and President of the Canadian Conference. Is it not natural that I should feel? (Hear, hear.) I have been asking myself, as I sat in this vast and beautiful hall, what harvest I have gathered from these bygone years; and though memory is keen in her accusations of unfaithfulness, I know that I have garnered somewhat for which I am very grateful. (Hear, hear.) I have to-day firmer faith than ever in the goodness of Almighty God, because of the way in which He has led me in the wilderness. I have firmer faith in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, because I have seen its adaptation in every variety of circumstance and upon every variety of character and colour. (Applause.) I have a firmer faith in the resurrection to eternal life, because in the mysterious providence of God I have been

linked to each hemisphere by the dead. May I add to all this I have a firmer faith in the unexhausted mission of Methodism—(“hear, hear,” and applause)—because I have, through all my wanderings, seen its adaptation to the wants of all people, and know that the blessing of the Lord abides with its testimony still. (Applause.) Let not the fathers and brethren or dear Methodist people in England be disheartened by any apparent check to their progress. (Hear, hear.) The glory has not departed from Israel. (Applause.) Go forth, as Mr. Cook told you—and a glorious illustration it was—with the red cross upon your arms, with the red cross upon the frontlet, with the spiritual ambulance which you are bearing to the rescue of the wounded and weary, and you need not and cannot fail. (“Hear, hear,” and applause.) The other day, as I was essaying for the first time a voyage on the Pacific Ocean, I could not but be cheered and encouraged by a sign which God in His providence gave me. As our vessel was steaming out of the harbour of San Francisco, and through the Golden Gate, God stretched a glorious rainbow from headland to headland, across the mile-wide channel, and under that arch of the covenant the voyagers passed out into the untried and dangerous sea. Oh, is there not such a sign for all of you? (Hear.) You have entered upon another year—perhaps one of encouragement or triumph, perhaps one of trial. You talk about the decrease in your numbers, and that is perhaps a partial cloud, but do you not know that it requires a cloud to show the rainbow? (Hear, hear.) Could you see the brilliant arch in such relief if it were not for the cloud on which it rests? Dear brethren, be not disheartened. To your knees and to your ranks. Such was once an inspiring watchword, and you may well repeat it. Pray and put forth the effort, and the promised fulness of blessing is yours. Faith in that promise is an important duty. Without it vain will be your seemly observances and propriety of outward conduct, vain your solemn litany or loud hosannas! Have faith, and your lives will be lightning, for if your lives are not lightning, it does not matter that your words are thunder. (Hear, hear.) Have faith, and by its loving gentleness it will make you still more abundantly active, and useful, and great. Have faith, and men shall be converted, and the world shall fall enfeebled at your feet, and the proud waters shall retire abashed before the Lord’s Israel, and the fire, forgetful of its fury, shall be but a bright slave to light you on your pathway home. Oh, if there can but rise a prayer, as the sound of many waters, from all the sacramental host, “Lord, increase our faith,” I can ask for you no higher gift than that, and as it goes up to heaven the Father will condescend to give the blessing, and in answer will say, as He stoops towards us, “Great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt,” and let all the people say, “Amen.”